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THE MILITANT GOD

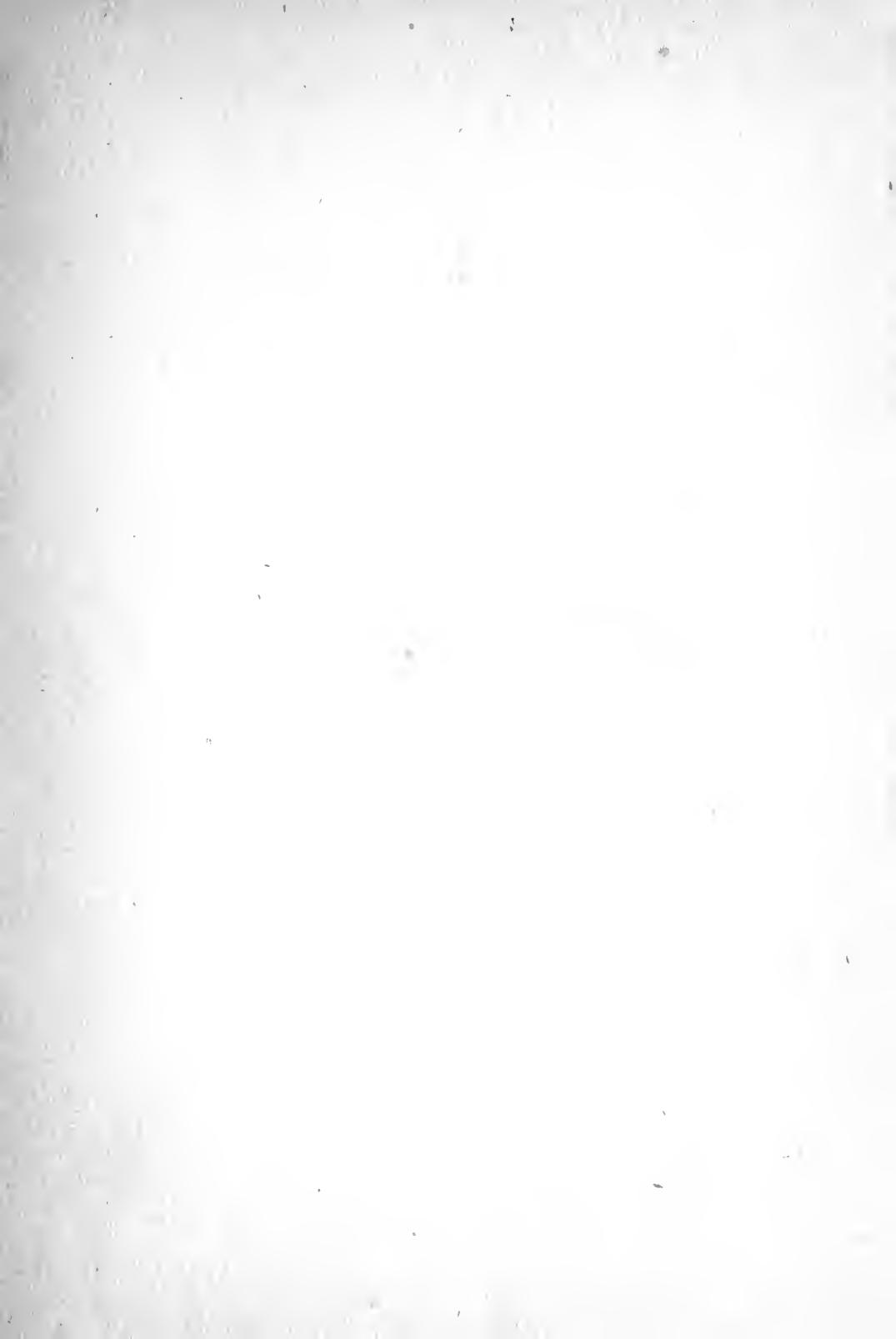


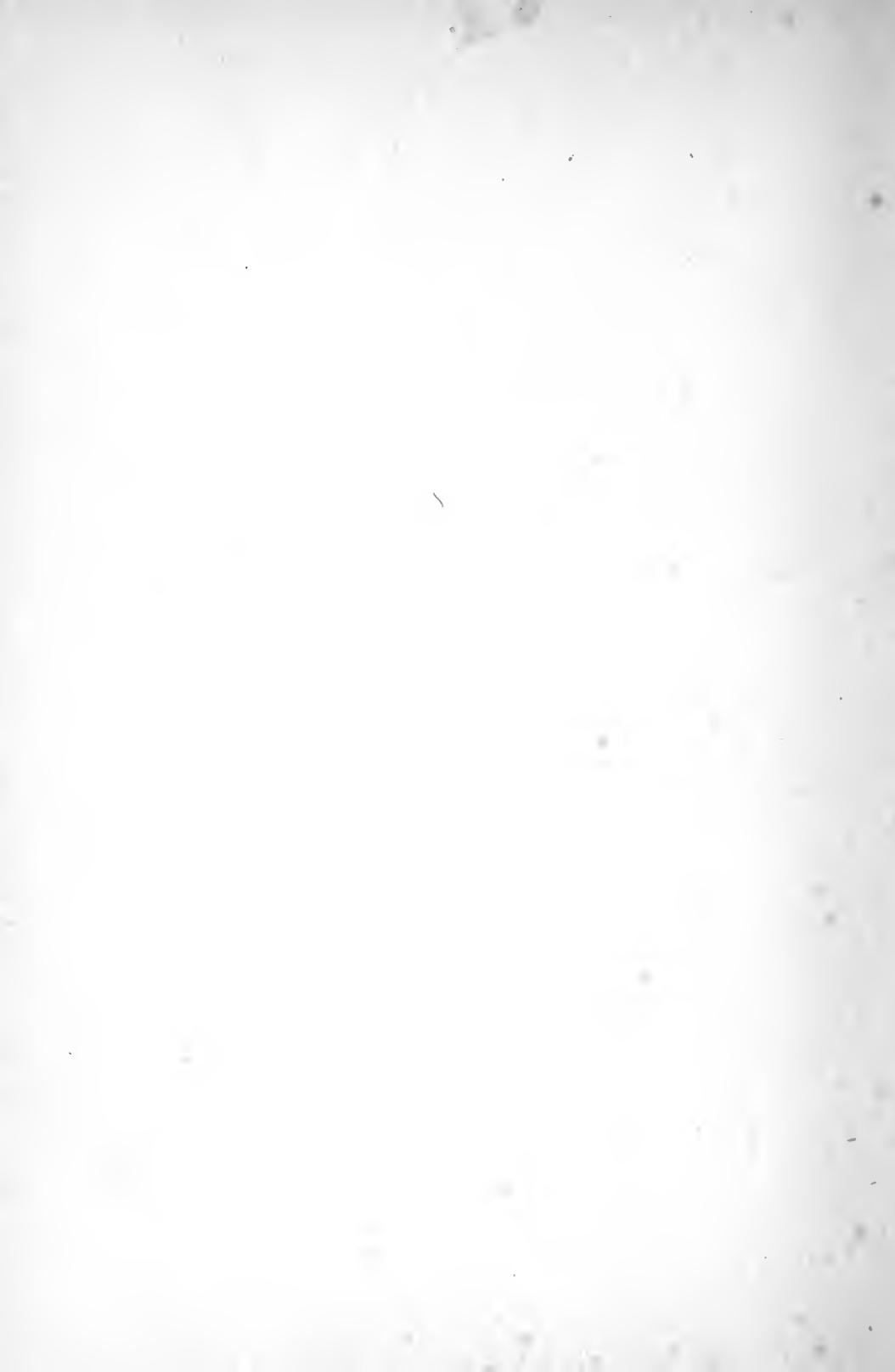
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THE
MILITANT GOD
AND
Some Sonnets, Verses,
And Rhymes

BY
CLIFFORD GREVE

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Member of the Bar of the United States.

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*Author of Rural Credits, Medical Jurisprudence,
(now in press), The Modern Cavalier. The Soul
of Guiseppi, Marie's Sweetheart, The New Con-
vert, The Shrine of Privacy, Elsa's Relatives,
Bohemia a la Mode, and other Plays*

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PREFACE

A drama does not require a preface. Aristotle puts it well, for he says: "A tragedy must be complete in itself."

Lessing adds a bit in his "Dramatic Notes" when he defiantly states in so many words: I can announce to an audience, my plot before the curtain arises and then those in the theatre should enjoy the play as well as if the story had not been told to them.

Charles Frohman was unquestionably the Pericles, or the Elizabeth of modern times. The world knows Charles Frohman. However, that name was a trinity. There were three brothers and perhaps the greatest was the least known and the purity of soul of the entire organization really belonged to a woman, the wife of one of them.

The writer once enjoyed the great privilege of being the Literary Manager and Play Reader for a Frohman. In that capacity the author read and analyzed more than fourteen hundred plays and in each, found, at least, the germ of a drama.

Play-reading is a hard job. I can understand why

Eight

the average person cannot read a play with satisfaction. I couldn't until I learned the great secret, *i. e.*, that the reader must be able to both sense, the sense of the words, and be able to visualize the action at one and the same time. From dull manuscript, that requires; first, a respect for the author, and secondly a reasonable amount of imaginative capacity, and, thirdly, as Schopenhauer would have said, an emotional urge inherent in the reader's soul to be capable of putting the entire force of opinion and action behind every character, in a drama, as each character, delivers each line.

The poet may write for self-satisfaction; the artist may paint or model for one patron; the editor may run a newspaper for his subscribers; the soul may make its peace with its God; the general may command an army; a king may fight his constituents and even the world; an after-dinner speaker may hear the laughter and the applause of his friends; a Moses release his nation from bondage; a Socrates drink the fatal cup in disappointment; a politician turn the tide of events; a Lincoln save a nation; a Napoleon write his name "indelibly upon the sands of time"; a Pope grant forgiveness; but an orator and a dramatist must appeal to the multitude or all is lost! That is the difference between power, reason, purpose and the unanswerable and ever possible dramatic call upon the emotions of men and women. Drama and oratory stand above all other arts. Everything else is a dull copy of what real men do!

The paramount desire of every great musician was to have at least one of his melodies played in a grind

organ or a hurdy-gurdy even though it was accompanied by the dancing of a begging, and all, too subserviently, soliciting monkey.

This is the real psychology of art. Go to Italy with me and watch the little girl who comes to the fountain with the pitcher, and she, just as she approaches puberty, looks at the statue of a Venus perhaps done by a tyro—never-the-less transfixes, stands and wonders if she cannot some day be so beautiful and so when maturity arrives, she is beautiful!

The sculptor, whoever he might be, won his appeal to the individual.

So a dramatist must win his appeal to the multitude. The audience is therefore, and forever a part of the play. The Greeks appreciated this in the Chorus. Furthermore they understood it, for the Chorus was the representation of the people of Athens.

Men and Women may be benumbed by the printed word, but will now and forever be revived by that which is spoken from the soul; with sincerity. There is a power in a voice; for it bespeaks the body; that all the mechanical devices in the realm of invention cannot supplant!

Imitate, if you will, the fervor, but the determination is not there, and the effort is but an excuse, which is the most crass imitation. Yet the imitation leads one upward! Who has ever gone to a "Movie" without the hope that the characters will and could speak? Note the anxiety on the faces of the spectators when they see the movement of a mouth, and in the future these mouths

Ten

will move and the screen will speak back to you (As an audience), not from a phonograph, but because sometime, chemically there will be; a screen made which will re-act to the waves of light and every word, or noise, that occurred when the film was made will rattle in the ears of those who will hear!

There can be no question that one can read a play, even though one, has not been trained in play-reading!

You will find the plot fully set out. Study it, and then commence to think how you (and you are the reader), would act under the stress which each character must suffer and in the end overcome. That is all that the author requests of the reader. Learn how to read a play and be yourself; not one actor, BUT EVERY ACTOR.

Love the purposes of each soul portrayed as though such be your own, even though you may not agree with them and then go out—into the world and meet your fellow men; ever with this thought before you: I am not what he is; but I can realize and deeply appreciate what he is, and if I be better than he is; I shall attempt to improve him, and if I be worse than he is; I SHALL ATTEMPT TO IMPROVE MYSELF. So will you always appeal to the multitude, and so will you, my reader, always be magnified for you are thinking of yourself, WHEN YOU ARE THINKING OF OTHERS!

—:THE AUTHOR.

" * * *, poet never credit gained
By writing truths, but things, like truths, well feigned."
—From the Second Prologue to
Ben Jonson's "Epicoene"

THE MILITANT GOD
A REVERSE TRAGEDY
IN
ONE ACT
BY
CLIFFORD GREVE

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To the one to whom all of
my work is really dedicated.
—THE AUTHOR.

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THE PLOT

Roger, the type of Englishman that one knows on the border of civilization and always meets as the first white man when one comes out of the wilds, is engaged in geological investigations in Mexico. His hut is on the side of a volcano. His wife, a Catholic, approaches death as the result of having given to the world a child. The physician pronounces her end. The Priest comes and anoints her. Roger refuses to acknowledge the power of death. Alone he fights death and wins his wife back to life by overcoming the crisis. The Priest returns when Roger has given up hope of convincing his wife that he really loved her and had only fought off and conquered death, and he and the Priest unite in a prayer to The Militant God.

THE CHARACTERS

ROGER STANHOPE.....	<i>An Englishman</i>
REVELIE STANHOPE.....	<i>His Wife</i>
FATHER CLEMENT.....	<i>An Old Priest</i>
(Complete description of the characters will be found in the text.)	
PERIOD.....	<i>The Present</i>
PLACE	<i>Mexico</i>

THE STAGE

TIME: A few minutes before Midnight.

SETTING: To portray the interior of Roger Stanhope's cabin near the imaginary volcano of Coaxima; in the Republic of Mexico. The walls are made of hewn mahogany logs, with an inclined thatched roof hung upon stringers for the ceiling.

(In the regions of Mexico and Central America far removed from modern methods of transportation, mahogany is freely used for the purposes such as have been described above.)

L. I. there is a spacious fireplace with overhanging hood built of uncut rocks and boulders. Above this is a high mantelpiece of heavy unpolished mahogany, upon which rests a common eight-day clock and a pair of ancient brass candlesticks fitted with fresh tapers. In the fireplace are large, old-fashioned andirons.

Sixteen

(*The back of this fireplace is to be filled with red electric globes which can be cut off in series or dimmed by the electrician as directed in the succeeding text. This is not to be a "practical" fireplace but must be made to appear as one.*)

Alongside the fireplace, but U. S., a large stack of brush. L. 3 a small window with four panes of glass. Back this up with an exterior of blue snow-capped mountains; also behind this window is a spotlight (with pale blue gelatin) which can be thrown anywhere upon the opposite wall of this setting. Next to this spotlight, a bunch light with red globes. To the left of center, on the back wall, some forked sticks arranged in pairs, one below the other, in which hang shotguns and rifles of the latest designs. Father Clement's saddlebags, a few well-thumbed magazines, some books, three brass cups, a wide-mouthed earthen bottle half-filled with wine, are on a table made of unfinished wood, further to the right, and against the back wall. Two shelves filled with boxes of cartridges and shells are above the table. On the other side of these, hung on the wall, is an hydrometer and hygrometer; while further

toward the door C. B. which opens forward from the flat, hangs an aneroid barometer. Below the door is a step made from a log. This door exposes, when open, an exterior drop representing mountains in the distance, and in the foreground a labyrinth of Spanish-needles and Candle Cactus. Outside the door have two flood lights with blue-cream mediums, as a full moon is supposed to be shining. To the right of this door on the back wall hangs a mercurial barometer. Next to this a home-made seismograph which can be rigged up at a very low expense. This is just as true of the other instruments which will be mentioned. The brass ball of the seismograph hangs from an iron bracket set near the ceiling, upon a steel ribbon one inch wide, painted black; and behind this on the back wall, from the ceiling to the floor, is painted a white band eighteen inches wide. Upper right hand corner a few shelves, upon which are a few books and some scientific instruments; such as a microscope, spectroscope, analytical balances, etc., etc.; bottles of formaldehyde solution containing

Eighteen

specimens; pieces of lava and other rock. Along-side this shelving, on right wall, are pinned insects. Standing on the floor below these, is an entomologist's net, and a few other samples of Mexican fauna and flora. R. 2 an old-fashioned walnut bedstead covered with Mexican blankets. A Rosary should be around the forward bedpost. Beside the bed F. is a low table or bench upon which has been placed medicine bottles; four or five unopened cans of condensed milk, nursing bottles, etc., etc. R. I. a door. (This need not be backed up because it will not be opened.) In front of the bed a roughly tanned skin. Center a large brown bear skin and another roughly tanned skin to the left of this. In front of the fire place two chairs or stools made of rough wood. Dull yellow baize to represent an earthen floor.

(Before the curtain goes up the orchestra is to play a sympathetic strain from "La Paloma" or any other Spanish music requiring only the stringed instruments. This dies away before the curtain rises.) (Flood and spotlights turned on. Bunch light off.)

THE PLAY

DISCOVERED: Father Clement in a chair near the fireplace, and Revelie, a small, dark-haired girl of twenty, asleep in the bed. A bundle representing her newly-born babe lies alongside of her, toward the audience. Father Clement is dressed in the regulation cassock of the Catholic Church. His shovel hat is in the other chair.

(Priests in Mexico are not allowed to wear this costume when outside the precincts of the Churches or Monasteries; but the author chooses to use this, and pleads dramatic license as an excuse.)

Revelie is in a nightgown with long flowing sleeves. Father Clement sits looking into the fireplace while he rubs the crucifix with the fingers of his right hand. The fireplace furnishes most of the lighting for the stage, and it

Twenty

must appear that the fire has burned low. From the spotlight out of the window L. 3 a beam comes which falls on the shelving in the upper right hand corner; this must be steadily but slowly moved according to the directions that follow as it represents a ray from the rising moon. Father Clement arises, picks up a piece of brush, throws it upon the andirons, and returns to his seat. A blaze floods the stage with red light. The door B. C. opens, and ROGER, a powerfully built man, enters. He is about thirty-two years old, smooth-shaven, and of a ruddy complexion. He has on a large Mexican felt sombrero, trimmed in silver filigree; a serape around his neck; the ends of which fall in front of and behind his left shoulder; a blue shirt, khaki riding trousers, chased leather belt, joined with cinch rings and strap; English military boots or heavy soled shoes and leather leggings. He is smoking a cigarette. He stands in the door which he has thrown wide open, as though to view the landscape beyond; then, after a moment, he closes the door, walks steadily towards Father Clement, who arises, picks up his

hat from the other chair and lays the forefinger of his right hand upon his lips as he resumes his seat.

FATHER CLEMENT:

S-h-u-s-h!

ROGER:

(*Stops, looks at the bed, then at Father C.*) .

FATHER CLEMENT:

She is asleep!

(*NOTE: The peculiar breaking of the lines which the reader will encounter is done to aid those who will appear in this play in getting the breathing the author intends; as all through this first scene the speeches must be delivered in half-whispers, and are, therefore, written in somewhat rhythmic prose; the reasons for which will become apparent as the reader proceeds.*)

ROGER:

May she enjoy the sweet surcease of sleep;
Father, bless this age of subtle drugs
that allay pain and stave off terror.

FATHER CLEMENT:

Jesus y Maria!

ROGER:

(*Removes his serape and sombrero and places them on table L. B.*)

Such a blessing is worthy of a Priest!

FATHER CLEMENT:

(*Speaks, after a slight pause.*)

Love for her needs no fresh brand
like I've just cast upon the fire!

ROGER:

(*Comes D. S., throws cigarette into fireplace.*)

No, none, for her my heart does not grow cold,
as do these nights, upon this high plateau.

(*Points to the moonbeam on the wall.*)

You will have the moon to light you home.

NOTE: The glow from the fireplace illuminates their faces.

FATHER CLEMENT:

Four good leagues to San Felipe!

ROGER:

When this moon sets, tomorrow's sun will be well up.

FATHER CLEMENT:

What is the hour?

ROGER:

(Lights a match and looks at the clock.)

NOTE: White lights in border, etc., up.

Not yet midnight!

FATHER CLEMENT:

Will my animal soon be ready?

ROGER:

Josef's saddling him, and will bring him with his own
'round to the door.

Twenty-four

(Blows out the match, and throws it in the fireplace, white lights off.)

FATHER CLEMENT:

Then Josef comes in here?

ROGER:

Rough fellow that he is, he loves her too,
and knows she must not be disturbed.

He will rap lightly on the door;
then ride with you.

(Takes seat in vacant chair.)

FATHER CLEMENT:

When Josef leaves, you will be alone;—

ROGER:

(Waves his hand toward the bed.)

I can best suffer anguish by myself,
knowing that solitude brings help.

(Slight pause. Then, turning, he speaks in a businesslike manner.)

Early in the morning,
near the Pueblo el Sarita
you will meet the Elder Manuel;
He is an honest Doctor,
you ask him to hurry?

FATHER CLEMENT:

A tiresome journey, should it be a useless ride;

ROGER:

(As if he caught an insinuation.)

The doctor will not come at all?

FATHER CLEMENT:

He shook his head.

(Negatively shakes his own head.)

ROGER:

(In surprise, and even deeper anguish.)

Padre! ! ?

Twenty-six

FATHER CLEMENT:

I fear not!

ROGER:

He did not mean——?

NOTE: Barking of the wolves is heard from off R. in the distance.

FATHER CLEMENT:

He meant just what you think.

(Arises.)

NOTE: The diphthong “ie” in the name “Revelie” is pronounced as the “ie” in the final syllable of “Jessie.”

ROGER:

(Arises.)

Revelie has got to die! ?

FATHER CLEMENT:

(*Sympathetically, but without stress.*)

Sad, but certainly not unexpected?

ROGER:

Did you tell her so?

FATHER CLEMENT:

When you were gone to the coral——I——

ROGER:

(*Tensely.*)

Let that thought come full upon her?

FATHER CLEMENT:

Perhaps—as I baptized the child!

ROGER:

(*Speaking sarcastically.*)

Such an important ceremony!

Must it be performed so soon?

FATHER CLEMENT:

The child is six days old.

Twenty-eight

ROGER:

(Speaking as before.)

She named him?

(Then turns toward Father C.)

FATHER CLEMENT:

Who else should name her child?

ROGER:

(Exhibiting much joy.)

She named him—Roger—?

FATHER CLEMENT:

(Nods affirmatively.)

Then I absolved her, and then—

ROGER:

(Exhibiting anxiety.)

Then what?

FATHER CLEMENT:

Anointed her!

ROGER:

(*Speaking ironically.*)

You are a true, kind friend!

FATHER CLEMENT:

Calm yourself, my son,
It was as she would have it.

ROGER:

You have joined hands with our common enemy,
and thrown your subtleness against me too?

(*A rumbling is heard as if in the distance off L.
and the seismograph moves slightly.*)

FATHER CLEMENT:

(*Who is frightened and nervous.*)

The earth trembles, as though your words
received from God the needed contradiction!

Thirty

ROGER:

(*Turns and looks at the seismograph.*)

Not from God—for Coaxima speaks!

NOTE: “Coaxima” is pronounced, Co-ex-ze-ma.

FATHER CLEMENT:

(*Goes U. S. and looks out of the window.*)

Grant it does not choose this night
to go into eruption?

ROGER:

Let her tear forth!
Thus does nature show
the forces she has stored away,
which, upon occasions, she freely lends to men!

FATHER CLEMENT:

(*As he returns D. S.*)

How can you stay here in this turmoil?

ROGER:

If she must die, what grander funeral;
what better grave could she desire,
than that Coaxima should cover us with ashes?

FATHER CLEMENT:

She is an exception; her duties to her race——
her Church—her God—she has performed!
It is not fair that she not rest in peace!

ROGER:

(*Moving up close to Father C.*)

If there be fairness and real retribution;
It is quite hard for me to comprehend why she,
who is so pure, so true, so good,——
My wife, without a sin, is still to die —?

FATHER CLEMENT:

It takes a better brain than yours or mine,
to answer such a simple question!

ROGER:

(*Moving away from Father C.*)

Thirty-two

Should he take her without a cause,
Gives your God nothing back to me?

FATHER CLEMENT:

He will receive her spirit into a better world,
Where what appears injustice here is proven to be fair!

(*The wolves howl as before.*)

ROGER:

Hear the wolves howl!—as though they would refute you!

FATHER CLEMENT:

Yes,—the wolves—they do howl.
What have you to say in answer to the wolves?

ROGER:

(*Pointing to the guns on the wall.*)

The wolves can roam about here only at my pleasure;
I am master of the wolves—I am a man!

(*Another rumbling is heard.*)

FATHER CLEMENT:

(*Pointing off L.*)

What say you to Coazima?

ROGER:

(*After looking at the seismograph, which vibrates more rapidly than before. He turns to Father C.*)

Coaxima is my friend, and I know her every tremor,
what each sky scorching belch from her portends!
How she melt the rocks of ages into glowing lava,
and bathes her passionate sides in that hot and hungry
flow!

Coaxima! How I love her, because I understand her.
She will let me turn her forces to more economic uses,
and when I've solved her all for man, she will bow before
me as her Lord!!

FATHER CLEMENT:

But death!?

ROGER:

You seek to awe me with these taunts,
like Coaxima does those peons in the valley!
Death can't remain forever such a monster;

Thirty-four

a dragon with a million mouths, his hunger ne'er appeased!

He works in many places, so can send but one head here;
and when that scourge comes swinging through the door
to pounce upon my loved one over there,
As I have jumped a many a doe from out its mossy bed,
tell me—Padre—? tell me—tell me if you can—
Shall I not be his master then?

FATHER CLEMENT:

I—I fear you will be weak—so weak—I pity you!
Every method of destruction which can bring on desolation,
seems now turned against you, and she whom you hold dear.
But in the ashes of despair,
the All-forseeing mind doth so arrange
our greatest hopes are sculptured into truths!

ROGER:

(Drawing away from Father C.)

Ah Padre!—is this all you have to give me,
that I must ask some cruel and unfair creature
whose form your words so far do fail to picture;
before whom you quake in dull astonishment,
and beg forgiveness which he does not send,
to give me hope of life beyond the grave?

FATHER CLEMENT:

(*Very peacefully.*)

The day may come when once again you'll need my services,
and night will once more find me at your cabin door.
But be the future as it may—are you fair, Senor Roger?

ROGER:

Another Priest, two years ago, in England,
before an Altar to the God of whom you speak;
with all the pomp His representative could muster,
gave me Revelie—to honor and protect!

FATHER CLEMENT:

(*Eagerly.*)

Then you are of the Church?

ROGER:

Must I repeat?

FATHER CLEMENT:

But you do claim a 'vantage of our Sacraments!

Thirty-six

ROGER:

(Positively.)

I have renounced the Church!

FATHER CLEMENT:

(In astonishment; resuming his seat.)

Renounced the Holy Mother—pray tell me, son,
where you can find more comfort in your helplessness?
For what have you renounced that which alone can give
you peace?

ROGER:

For science!—Padre, for science! The story of a lowly
realm;
for the knowledge which I, within myself, can say is
mine!

FATHER CLEMENT:

Faith has to do with causes.
How hollow is your science,
for it can only reckon with effects?

(Pause during which Roger looks at Father Clem-

ent as though a new idea had suddenly struck him.)

For those you quake right now in fear.
What kind of man will I find here,
should I drop in upon you, late to-morrow?

ROGER:

(*Contemptuously.*)

What?—Under these conditions would you attempt to make me weak?!!

FATHER CLEMENT:

(*As he rises.*)

No!—recognize a will,
from which you draw as soon
your powers as a man!

ROGER:

(*Defiantly.*)

Power?—That is truth! !
There is nothing in faith that can stand against the courage of a man!

Thirty-eight

FATHER CLEMENT:

(*As another rumbling is heard.*)

Courage flows from purity of purpose,
without regard to the life one may have led.
Concerning her purity I have no doubt;
It is for *you*, I lift my earnest prayer!
That you may meet this sorrowful crisis,
unkind to you as now appears the issue,
and rise above your fate, a penitent man,
confessing your faults, but forgiven your sins;
to carry on your work in this life,
but respecting God,—
that you may be Glorified in Heaven!

ROGER:

(*After looking at the seismograph.*)

Have you considered all that her death means?

(*Pause.*)

I see you haven't—well—when she dies, I do die too!
Then all that I have learned would be to science lost.
She must live that I may ease the labor of this world,
or else each sacrifice of hers was made for naught!

(*Three taps on door C. B. are heard.*)

FATHER CLEMENT:

Believe me, it grieves me much that I must leave.

ROGER:

(*Crosses to table, picks up cup and bottle; pours out some wine, and as he hands the cup to Father Clement.*)

Let this warm you!

FATHER CLEMENT:

Will you not drink with me?

ROGER:

You drink alone, while I step out
to see if Josef has the girths drawn tight.

FATHER CLEMENT:

(*As Roger exits C. D. B.*)

To our better thoughts!

(*Reverently raises the cup above his head, and between the sips which he takes, he appears to be in deep thought, as he fingers his crucifix.*)

Forty

When he has finished Roger re-enters C. D. B.)

ROGER:

Josef wants to take the other trail.

FATHER CLEMENT:

What do you think?

ROGER:

(Indicating by his gestures the right from the left, and showing the path to the left is the one which the Padre used on his trip up the mountain, and is also the shorter of the two.)

It is some further; it leads from Coaxima.

FATHER CLEMENT:

The nearest route will be too long for me.

(As he sets down the cup and picks up his saddle bags.)

Be strong my Son!

(As he opens C. D. B.)

Pax Vobiscum!

(*He raises his right hand after opening the door.*)

My blessing be upon you!

ROGER:

Good night.

(*Father Clement, exit.*)

ROGER:

(*Sits down in front of fire place to think. Then arises and crosses to table, pours out some wine, and after a moment's contemplation pours it from the cup back into the bottle, replacing the stopper in the container. The covers on the bed move. He gazes intently at the bed.*)

REVELIE:

(*Sighs.*)

ROGER:

(*Starts.*)

Forty-two

REVELIE:

(After moaning, turns half over.)

ROGER:

(Stands C. and rolls his sleeves up to his elbows.)

REVELIE:

(Moans more distinctly than before.)

ROGER:

(Feels the muscles of his arms, expands his chest and then extends his arms and flexes them, as though he were testing his muscles.)

(NOTE: Moonbeam is slowly but steadily moving toward Revelie's head.)

REVELIE:

(Moves restlessly and then awakens.)

ROGER:

(Peers at her and leans forward but does not move.)

NOTE: He shows by the muscles of his face that he hopes she will fall asleep again.

REVELIE:

(Who seems lost.)

Roger—Roger!

ROGER:

(Takes two steps toward her and then speaks softly, but with extreme strength and sincerity.)

Yes! !

REVELIE:

Padre!—

ROGER:

He has gone to say a mass.

(Pause, during which Roger realizes that the crisis of her illness must soon come. He clenches his fists, and draws every muscle of his body taut, and takes deep audible breaths, which he does repeatedly during the next ten or fifteen speeches.)

Forty-four

The sleep has helped you?

REVELIE:

(Who is in pain.)

Roger!—Roger! ! The pain!—Roger—
The pain is coming back!

ROGER:

(Pleadingly.)

Grit your teeth!

NOTE: The fire is about out, and but for the moonbeam the stage is almost dark.

REVELIE:

(As she weeps convulsively, her whole body shaking and shivering.)

Oh!—Roger!—Roger! ! !—You don't know!

ROGER:

Yes dear, I know, for I am suffering with you!

REVELIE:

(Sighs, then speaks appealingly.)

Come here!

ROGER:

(Crosses and stands behind the bed.)

I am by your side.

REVELIE:

I don't see you.

ROGER:

(Takes hold of her hands.)

REVELIE:

(Thinking she sees an apparition in the distance.)

There they are!

ROGER:

(As he leans over her.)

No one is here but you and I!

REVELIE:

Hold me Roger, hold me!

ROGER:

(Gathers her in his right arm; with his hand about her right shoulder.)

I have you, Revelie!

REVELIE:

(As though inspired.)

Keep me from sinking—

(Slight pause.)

sinking into a great chasm!—

inside of Coaxima!

It is so wonderful, Roger—

(Slight pause.)

the bottom of Coaxima!

All is cold and black—

(*Slight pause.*)

so dark—so solid—and so strong!

ROGER:

(*Anxiously.*)

You are deceived by what you have heard me say!

REVELIE:

(*As she holds out her hands in front of her, and clenches her fists, for she is making a great effort.*)

I move so fast,—how we do love—
I feel so safe with you.

ROGER:

(*Kneeling by the bed and speaking affectionately.*)

But one worse fate could come to me,
than if you were to go—
and that would be that you should live
and I not have your love.
For love, laughter, and strength,
is all there is to life.
You have sacrificed so much

Forty-eight

that I might have this son;
just for him and me, you must try to live.

REVELIE:

(*As Roger rises.*)

I do so want to live!

(*She caresses him.*)

ROGER:

Your caresses seem like perfumes,
wafted from the shores of Ophir,
Spiced with love, ambition's yearning;
softly setting hearts athrobbing,
heavy laden with desire.

REVELIE:

(*Sorrowfully.*)

It is so sweet of you to say it,
but sweeter still to me,
when I remember how often in the past
you have repeated those dear words.
You see I know you haven't waited,
'til now, to let me have your praises.

ROGER:

Revelie—think—think of all you are to me!
I cannot let you go, I can't—I won't!
Perhaps the future of the world
hangs in the balance at this moment,
so important to mankind is each lover's labor.
By living you can share with me,
the making of new history.

REVELIE:

You lift me up with hopes—Impossible hopes!

ROGER:

To live—you have but to refuse to die!

REVELIE:

(Falls limp in his arms.)

How far away you seem—
You, who never refused me anything!

(Slight pause.)

Can't you see me beckoning to you?

Fifty

ROGER:

(*Anxiously.*)

Come back, Revelie, come back.

REVELIE:

Not with me? You will not go when I go?

Then let me alone! let go—let go! Leave me to go alone!

ROGER:

(*Carefully draws his arm from under her head and allows it to drop back upon the pillow.*)

REVELIE:

(*Shrieks again, but in anguish.*)

ROGER:

(*As he leans over her the moonbeam strikes his face, and he speaks helplessly.*)

Must I stand here and watch this mystery?

See death ravish you?—and not know where you go?

(*And then in anguish.*)

Revelie, what crushes your frail body?—

(*Tensely but softly.*)

Is there a soul?

REVELIE:

(*As he straightens up the moonbeam strikes her face, and the tears roll down her cheeks as she raises her hands in prayer.*)

ROGER:

(*After contemplating her for a moment he opens his shirt; rolls it back, and partly bares his chest, which he expands. Raises his head as if to speak to the realms unknown.*)

Let all the strength—let all the power,
let all the health—and all the love
with which I have so long been blessed,
pour from mine to her weak and helpless body!
Let all the blood that courses through my arteries
flow freely through her stagnant fevered veins.
Let my heart beat for her heart—there is enough love
in me
to fill a multitude of beings with life, in all its purity.
Death—if you must have a victim, take *me!!*

Fifty-two

REVELIE:

(With all the joy that only the dying experience.)

There is no pain!

Death is so beautiful!

(Moves her head from side to side.)

ROGER:

I do not see him!

REVELIE:

He brings the sweetest music,
and to its harmony shows me—

ROGER:

I want to know—go on—please tell me all!

REVELIE:

(After sighing as before.)

I see knowledge and beauty—but without form—

ROGER:

(*Positively.*)

Enough!—thirsting for knowledge I forgot!

(*Takes hold of her hand.*)

REVELIE:

Death offers me freedom—

ROGER:

His seductive lie! Now fight him!

REVELIE:

I am too weak—

ROGER:

My heart is being ground between two millstones;
by an unwelcome destiny!

REVELIE:

I am so happy—go away—
leave me alone with death;
with him there is no suffering—
there has been so much with you!

Fifty-four

(*NOTE: Change the gelatins on the flood lights outside the door to brilliant red. Turn on the bunch light, but keep it dim. The gelatin on the spotlight is not to be changed from pale blue.*)

ROGER:

Oh, Death, I feel the poison in your sting;
your powers have you proven well to me!—?

REVELIE:

(*Reviving and speaking as though this were her final effort.*)

In Death's sweet arms,—I hate you Roger!

NOTE: The moonbeam has moved forward so that it strikes the bed just beyond her face.

ROGER:

(*Speaking in cool determination.*)

Death—you sneak so quietly upon the weak,
I challenge you to measure strength with me.

(*Strikes her a telling blow on the cheek; then, after a pause.*)

Revelie!

(*Strikes her again as before—then a long pause; during which absolute silence prevails and the ticking of the clock is heard; then he speaks her name anxiously, sorrowfully, and yet commandingly.*)

R e v e l i e !

REVELIE:

(*Turns her head from side to side upon the pillow.*)

ROGER:

(*Intercepts the beam from the moon, as he leans over her and desperately digs his hands into her hair, grasping it in fistfuls, and then stiffening his body out to its full height, delivers the next speech defiantly, as he drags her from the bed, breaking this speech so that her body can be heard to fall upon the floor, and completing it as he drags her towards C.*)

No, Death, the grave is not a victory!

(*The seismograph moves with long, irregular broken vibrations.*)

Fifty-six

REVELIE:

(Twisting in his grasp and extending her arms toward the bed.)

My soul!—My soul!

(NOTE: Off in the distance, as though they were running in terror, to shelter, the wolves howl. This gradually dies away.)

ROGER:

(Loudly, in angry derision.)

Your soul—your soul?

(He shakes her violently.)

REVELIE:

(Shrieks in terror.)

ROGER:

Your soul—

(Laughs sneeringly.)

Your soul? Damn your soul—you have no soul—

It is your body, and your body is unclean.
I can kick your body—Ah! your body—that is real—
and I can only deal with what I know is real.

(*The seismograph moves more rapidly.*)

NOTE: A distinct explosion is heard coming from the distance off L. which is followed by long, low, heavy rumblings, that must not be too loud.)

REVELIE:

(*Terrified.*)

O—h—!

ROGER:

(*Throws her roughly upon the rug C.*)

REVELIE:

(*Raises her hands, and cries out in mournful appeal.*)

Oh—Oh—O-h!

(*During this speech, as the result of the tremor from the volcano, the door C. B. flies open. The sky is bright with fire. Without using the foot-lights, get all the red light possible; this next*

Fifty-eight

picture must appear in silhouette with the light from the door as a background.)

ROGER:

You feel the pain? You feel those torturing blows?

(As he kneels over her he raises his fist as though he would strike her again.)

Say to me you feel the pain—

That is the sign your life comes back again.

REVELIE:

(Raising her hands appealingly.)

Don't!—Don't! ! !

ROGER:

(Rises and intercepts the moonbeam, and as it strikes full upon his face, he laughs long and victoriously.)

REVELIE:

Help me to my bed!——

ROGER:

(Leans over her, and with much tenderness.)

Yes—my own—yes—my own, sweet Revelie!

(Gathers her in his arms; repeating the words at will, as he lays her in the bed and covers her while she weeps. Then he crosses and closes door C. B. then to fireplace and throws on some brush. The new fuel hisses back at him as it catches. The stage lights up. He stands in front of the fire for a moment with his left hand thrown back upon the mantel piece, as though her weeping so affected him that he did not know how to proceed.)

Revelie, don't cry now, for the crisis—it is past!

(Pause, during which he crosses to bed.)

You will live, I know that you will live!

(Slight pause during which he leans over her.)

Don't cry my dearest, is it so sad to live?

(Slight pause.)

I know why you hate me, but I will make amends.

Sixty

(Another slight pause, and then he utters the rest of the lines in this speech between appealing sobs, because he is heart-broken, that she does not understand the reasons for what he has done.)

O—Revelie, please look at me—just once—look—
Won't you listen?

(Slight pause.)

Revelie, you think I swore at you? No! not at you—
I am sure that you can realize I could not be so cruel—
I swore at death—I struck only at our common enemy!

(Slight pause.)

REVELIE:

You laughed Roger—you laughed!

ROGER:

Laughed?—I know I laughed! You wonder why I did?
I laughed so loud at Death—but I proved I love you
more than that dark and heartless myth!

(Kisses her.)

REVELIE:

(Turns her face away from him.)

ROGER:

(Kisses her again, long and affectionately.)

NOTE: Change the red gelatins on the flood lights to red and yellow, extinguish the bunch light outside the window.

REVELIE:

No more—no more—Never again!

ROGER:

(Kisses her, and then after a slight pause, he kisses her again.)

Victory! you winged but headless Goddess,
Born in man's brain to destroy his noblest thoughts!
You bring no balm, no feeling, no reason,
Except that you enslave the poor defeated
and make the majority the captive of the few.
What a fool I've been to worship such a demon,
Well knowing that on the eve of every battle,
you desert the conquering hero of the day,
You laugh at, you mock, you scorn success, you fly
away,

Sixty-two

the very moment you have learned what man can do!

(*He falls on the bed and weeps copiously. Father Clement enters C. D. B. and gropes about the room as he moves forward, as a man would coming into a half-dark interior from under a blinding, brilliant light.*)

FATHER CLEMENT:

(*Whispers.*)

Roger?

ROGER:

(*As he rises.*)

Padre?

FATHER CLEMENT:

The lava is pouring across the trail!

ROGER:

(*As he crosses and falls into Father Clement's arms.*)

Padre—a miracle has happened, Revelie lives!—

FATHER CLEMENT:

God willed it so!

REVELIE:

(*Sits up in bed.*)

FATHER CLEMENT:

(*Raises his cross.*)

Amen!

(*He lowers the cross, and presses it upon Roger's lips.*)

ROGER:

(*Looks at Revelie, and in his joy kisses the cross.*)

Sixty-four

REVELIE:

(Shrieks, in ecstasy.)

Roger—my husband! !

(END OF PLAY.)

SOME SONNETS

In this poetic day of *vers libre* it may seem somewhat reactionary for one to attempt even a short sonnet sequence. However, the rules of a sonnet are inexorable and in this age of war, which has become the practical business of most every nation, there has never been a time when the mind of an author, no matter how fertile it may be, should be so constrained by the exact requirements of art.

Mental discipline is the first requisite of physical life and it may truthfully be said that the "muckrakers" of ten to twenty years ago were the true creators of national disorganization which makes it necessary today for us as a country to almost shut our doors as Carthage did while our women plat their hair into bow-strings and our men pound our plowshares into bayonets.

A decade past, art ran wrong; and the disciplinarian was hated, while today we are crying for the very type of executives that in the only too short time past, the power of the pen and the yellow press, ruthlessly sought to destroy.

MY LUCIA.

From the Italian-American Opera, "The Soul of Giuseppe," as produced for the author by the Neapolitan Prima Donna, Adelina Roattino.

Alone I stand tonight, my Lucia,
Upon the brink of doubt I quake with fear;
For not a note of music strikes my ear.
Have you deserted me, my Lucia?

I ask no more of God, my Lucia:
Than He let me make you, my muse, a queen
Of thought, whose regal powers yet unseen
Shall bring the world to kneel to Lucia!

I feel your heart is yearning for a lay;
—Intending only you to satisfy,
My inspiration pleads with me to try,
Soul, mind, and hand shall find no rest I pray,

Until I've sung a song to Lucia,
A song of love, to thee, my Lucia!

MY SOUL.

Years ago a wise man came to see me,
He said what then, to me, did not seem odd,
Brazenly he announced: "There is no God."
And you may hear—his well thought simile!—

"I mean a greater God than Humanity
"For God would have all perfectly designed,
"And naught improved by man's imperfect mind!"
He made his arguments so clear to me,

That, with him, I came quickly to agree,
I saw the happiness about my hearth,
Did not come from God, but from mother earth,
Until one day inspired by harmony,

Despite all my knowledge to the contrary,
Faith moved me into God's sanctuary!

*To, Judd Mortimer Lewis, of
The Houston Post: The Poet
Laureate to The Kiddies of
America.*

A SONNET.

*Written when the news reached the world regarding
the passing of Mrs. Mary Baker G. Eddy.*

To a last resting place men took the body,
To let the matter change to cosmic dust.
The Jovian bolts she shot can never rust;
For death makes life as endless as the sea!

From dust we come and back to dust go we,
So far as those unlearned may be concerned,
But by your fight and virtue you have earned
Peace with the bles-sed in Infinity!

Your soul fears not what most men fear to be;
But in the lives of millions still employs—
Itself, in creating the purest joys,
Unknown to those enslaved to misery!

Oh God forgive them, if for her they weep;
She is not dead:—nor even gone to sleep!

SWEETHEART.

Tonight there passed before me those other years,
When like the faithful Mary of Magdala
You deemed one man, true born son of Allah;
And yourself, the love-lit chord of his career!

Then passed our fate, child of unworthy fears
Born to be cursed upon that barren date,
Which marks the closing of the law-locked gate,
Against which my spirit hurled a thousand spears.

I refuse to believe that you e'er sold
For baubles of silver, or rings of gold,
Or fame, or power, or fashion's mold,
The hopes we cherished in the days of old!

Love only has power when served by thought;
Wise men give that;—while fools think it bought!

NIGHT.

The day is dead, but night gives thought no tomb.
There is no fun'ral pyre, no doubt, no end,
For thought; which has neither foe, nor friend;
But as we take it, fortells joy, or gloom!

The soul of her, who once dwelt in my room
Denies me sleep, and I must lay awake,
And count the beads of Sorrow, strung by Fate
On a thread, filched from Vanity's loom!

But yonder comes the sun, night's turned to day,
No longer can I see the Met'ors fly:
And I, by thought and work can well repay,
To love, what Fate, made her believe a lie!

For what I cannot conquer with my mind,
Was ne'er, by Nature, for me, designed.

*To the most estimable
of the estimable, M. V. W.*

COSMOS.

Among the constellations in the skies,
From nadir to the murky Milky Way:
Set by night, in sapphire, e'er to stay;
Are some jewels, a Midas never buys !

Truth, loving to be loved, heard my cries,
"Give me the secret of Nature's leaven?"
And across the endless realms of Heaven,
She made stars dance for me in paradise

If you have embryonic memory,
In the whirling Andromeda you can see
The labor of matter trying to be,
What mothers have borne, in you and me !

O'er trillions of miles, throughout Cosmic room,
God gives the real chance to mind and a womb !

TO *LOWELL*

*The one who first accepted
the writer's theory concerning
the double canal system on
Mars; and from whom, the
author, in turn, learned the
poetry of Astronomy.*

SOME VERSES
&
RHYMES

Seventy-four

TO MY WIFE.

Wife is but a legal term.
It means naught to me.
For my wife shall be my chum,
Into Eternity.

STEVIANO.

If you but knew,—
The sorrow in my soul?
If you but knew,—
How well I've paid Life's toll?
If you but knew,—
The terrors that surround me now?
If you but knew?
If you but knew?

If I could tell—
You, better, dearest boy?
If I could tell—
You, of my every joy?
If I could tell—
You, all my woes?
If I could tell?
If I could tell?

Could I have won—
You, when your life was young?
Could I have won—
You, ere your heart turned dumb?
Could I have won—
You, before the other one?
Could I have won?
Could I have won?

To, H. I. H. Princess Louise.

THE GAMBLER'S TOAST.

*From "The Convert" as produced by Lorraine
Buchanon, and written for her by the Author.*

In the midst of joy,
Prepare for the sorrow;
Which I know, old boy,
Is sure to follow!

When we laugh, we sigh
For the joy turned loose.
When we sigh, we laugh,
At the ace turned deuce!

MADELINE OF THE PRAIRIE.

On every hill and heather,
Where he rode in spurs and leather,
 And in quiet, or the midst of Nature's din;
The birds seemed always singing,
In his ears there kept a' ringing,
 Just a name he well remembered,
 Madeline.

In the evening and at morning,
When the bulls are always bawling,
 As o'er the crackling fire he held his tin;
He'd look out across the prairie,
And he sometimes saw a fairie,
 Looking like the girl he once called
 Madeline.

When he layed down to slumber,
'Round him coy-otes without number,
Couldn't call him from "The Land of Might have
Been"!

With his saddle for a pillow,
And his blanket but a willow,
He wept sadly o'er his love for
Madeline.

One night when he was dreaming,
'Cross the prairie came a' sweeping,
Just a wind which murmured, "Come, for now you
win"!

When he staggered on in wonder,
To the creek just over yonder,
He was greeted by a nymph, 'twas
Madeline.

MISERY.

If there be a place,—beyond the grave,
Where souls may live,—*en rapport?*—
Then I wish,—when there,—you'll dwell
Among all those,—you have loved so well!

But I,—not having faith in such futurity,
Lost all,—when I lost you!
Have living been as dead,—since then,
And dead,—been living on, alone—
With hope ahead!

For Heaven without you,—would be a hell!
And Hell with you;—my Heaven!
I care not where I go—since then,
Nor what I do,—my thoughts live on;
And they live with you!

SOME QUATRAINS.

Life once appeared a glittering treasure,
When I was well pleased with Nature's measure:

 But in the night I met the worst of thieves—
Wealth—Who offered for my service—pleasure!

Thereafter, Life did ne'er appear the same.
Once having learned the rules, I played the game:
 Winning until I sought a woman's love,
And found the price was more than wealth or fame!

I tried to love, but had forgotten how:
For Love demandeth service here and now,
 And her manners the outgrowth of tender care,
Left to my choice—to either go, or bow!

I went, and falling to the ground to weep,
Saw visions in the celestial deep,
 Reflecting the world as it should have been;
But I changed it none—for I fell asleep!

TO A PHOTOGRAPH.

I knew her eyes—those liquid eyes,
Like rain-drops in the sun,
They turned all light into its parts,
And those colors,—I knew every one.

I knew her lips,—the softest lips,
That mine have ever kissed.
My soul would burn when mine touched hers,
And all things mundane turned to mist.

I knew her ways,—her little ways,
I knew how to make her laugh,
I'd give my life for her old chap,
But she gave me,—her photograph!

*To, Edwin Carty Ranck, a
poet, and incidentally, Dra-
matic Critic on The Brooklyn
Eagle.*

THE REAL AMERICAN.

Don't sing me a song of wealth and class,
Don't play me a theme of gold and brass;
But tell me a story of life's beginning,
Which finishes up with the hero winning,
A victory for all of his fellow men,
A release for some soul from a prison den;
While his body fought hard with its final breath,
Make his mind still deny the power of death!
Give him voice always shrieking Freedom's yell,
And an arm breaking down the gates of Hell!

THE REAL AMERICAN!

*To, Hon. Louis F. Post,
Assistant Secretary of Labor.*

TO MY MOTHER.

I called her my mother,
I never knew why,
But when I was a baby,
She answered my cry.

I sucked at her breasts,
I never knew why,
Except when a baby,
She heard me cry.

I longed for her kisses,
I never knew why,
Except when a youth,
She begged me to try!

I tried to please her,
I never knew why,
Except that my mother,
Never could lie!

When I was a soldier,
She always said:—
“Come home with your honor,—
Or, come to me dead!

A SONG OF THE SEA.

(*To the Tune of the Caulking Hammer.*)

I love to sail the friendless sea;
For all the world's but a town to me;
The wind;—its streets with all their cheats—
And the sky,—but a woman with her deceits!

I love the path and the strife of trade,
I long for the fight when the pirates raid,
The boom is the pointer on my course:
Sometimes good,—and sometimes worse!

A sailor now, is a sailor bold,
As much as the sailormen of old;
Driven by steam, it does not seem
That we hear less of the winds that scream!

For “Sta’board’s;” “Sta’board,” and “Port” is “Port,”
And we of the seas are the same old sort,
From Neptune’s line, to the colder Balt’,—
The decks are stalked by the same old salts!

The "Lubbers" laugh when on the strand
M' sea-legs wobble in the sand;
But they ne'er sailed a junk with me,
Down the coast of Tripoli!

They never heard the Mermaid's call,
They never heard the Bo's'n bawl,
They never saw the Dolphin's jump,
And never worked a leaky jump!

They think my rovin's awful bad,
But I don't care for that be-gad:—
'Cause let me give you a little tip,
There's a lot o' fun aboard a ship!

The hold's a dark and dingy place,
First filled with gold and finest lace,
Then cradled up for a cargo o' chop
To feed the hogs for a butcher's shop!

The Fo'c'stle bunk is just a home
On the back of an engine built to roam,
An' the word of the Capt'n is the law;
F'r he's got grit,—an' a square set jaw!

'E laughs and sings in the roughest seas,
An' curses every head on breeze.
Around the "Horn" or off the "Gate"
He'll cut the cards with old Dame Fate!

When I'm at sea, I long for land,
An' all the silks o' Samarcand.
When I'm on land, it is the sea
That always seems the best to me!

A landin's but a wenches call,
A city but a bar-room hall!—
That'll fill my lungs with smoky fog,
As I swap tales, an' down my grog!

What matters time or place or lay?
Why! Rio's better than Old Bombay!
The girls in Shanghai like to court,
Just as they do in every port!

But when I'm broke,—my silver gone,
My legs and arms are just as strong,
For a Kopeck, "tu-pence" or Cash'll flip,
I'll find a berth in a safe ol' ship!

An' runnin' 'gainst the teeth o' a storm,
I ain't a'scared o' the worst o' harm:
But if the worst should come to the worst,
Her bottom go, or her seams should burst—

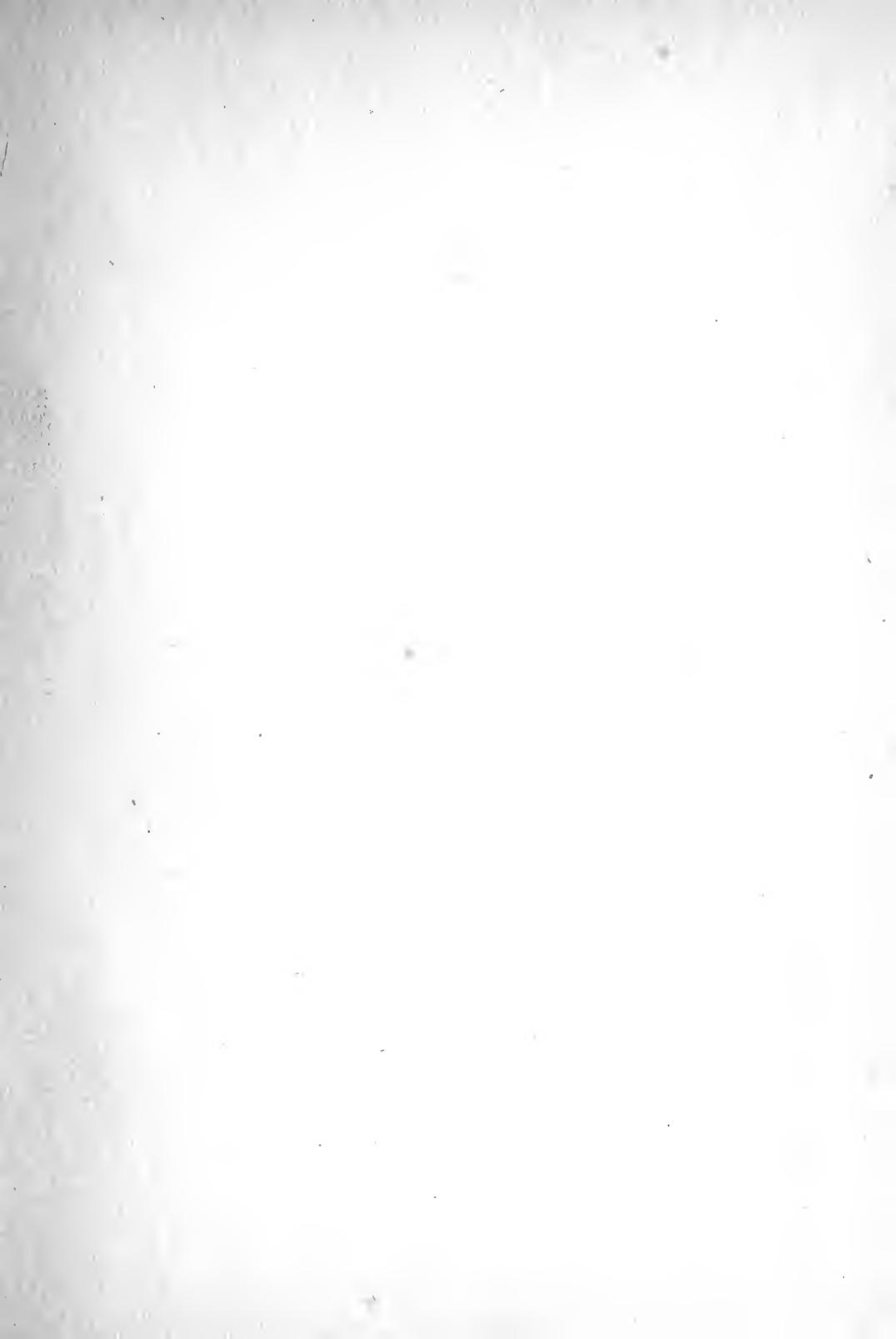
In a hurricane out a' the gay Nor'-west
I'll be on her decks, an' do my best,
But if I'm swept in—to the deep,
There ain't no-body a-goin' to weep! —

Eighty-eight

For there won't be no last request,
When a white-cap smothers me to rest;—
But driftin' Death's unchartered sea,
I'll never sight Hell on my lee!

*To, James B. Connelly, whose
stories of the sea will be read
as long as there remains a
vestige of English literature.*







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